



## *Arizona Department of Child Safety*

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TITLE	POLICY NUMBER	
Extended Foster Care Quality Review	DCS 12-04	
RESPONSIBLE AREA	EFFECTIVE DATE	REVISION
Office of Quality Improvement	10/1/19	1

### **I. POLICY STATEMENT**

The Department of Child Safety (DCS) is committed to ensuring that the extended foster care program is providing young adults with the needed services and supports to successfully transition to adulthood. An Extended Foster Care Quality Review (EFCQR) is an independent body that will confirm the young adult is meeting eligibility criteria, has connections to a permanent family, supportive adults who are actively involved in their lives, has a person-centered case and transition plan which support the young adult's identified goals and future planning, and is acquiring individualized skills to develop the tools needed to thrive outside the foster care system.

### **II. APPLICABILITY**

This policy applies to young adults who are eligible for extended foster care, DCS Specialists, Supervisors, and the Quality Review Team who conduct the Extended Foster Care Quality Reviews.

### **III. AUTHORITY**

[A.R.S. § 8-202](#)

Jurisdiction of juvenile court

[A.R.S. § 8-456](#)

Investigative function; training; voice stress analysis; recordings; criminal offenses; definition

[A.R.S. § 8-521.02](#)

Extended foster care program; requirements

#### IV. DEFINITIONS

Case management information system: The Department's automated child welfare record keeping system.

Department or DCS: The Arizona Department of Child Safety.

Department Field Operations: The entity within the Department who is responsible for all case management and delivery of services to a qualified young adult.

Extended Foster Care Quality Review (EFCQR): An administrative review of voluntary extended foster care conducted by a team independent from Department Field Operations with the qualified young adult, DCS Specialist and any other individual the young adult invites to discuss the progress of the case plan and to identify and obtain needed services or supports.

Qualified Young Adult (QYA): A former dependent child who is at least 18 years of age and not over 21 years of age, who meets the criteria for an extended foster care program pursuant to A.R.S. 8-521.02, and who signs a voluntary agreement to participate in the program.

Quality Review Team (QRT): DCS staff who are responsible for scheduling and facilitating reviews of qualified young adults (QYAs) in extended foster care. They also provide guidance and support to QYAs and their Specialist to help them reach the goals of their case plans.

Supervised Independent Living Setting: A type of voluntary extended foster care placement where qualified young adults can live on their own, while receiving case management and support services to help them become independent and self-sufficient.

Voluntary Extended Foster Care Agreement: An agreement entered into between the young adult, age 18 or older, and DCS which meets the removal criteria in section 472(a)(2)(A)(i) of the Act. This agreement documents the program requirements, case planning, and service provision to ensure the informed consent of the QYA in the participation program, and authorization for the DCS to have placement and care responsibility.

## V. POLICY

- A. The Department will manage the Extended Foster Care Quality Review (EFCQR) under the Office of Quality Improvement to ensure that all qualified young adult (QYA) cases are reviewed by a party independent to Department Field Operations at least every six months.
- B. The initial EFCQR shall occur within six months of the QYA signing the Voluntary Extended Foster Care Agreement, then every six months thereafter until the QYA exits the program.
- C. The Quality Review Team shall identify which cases require reviews and schedule reviews with the QYA and assigned DCS Specialist.
- D. The Quality Review Team will prepare and document the meeting. The Quality Review Team will provide the QYA and DCS Specialists constructive, strength-based feedback of all reviews.
- E. Quality Review Team
  - 1. The Quality Review Team will consist of two Review Specialists and one Administrative Assistant, who will report to the Permanency and Youth Services Manager.
  - 2. The Quality Review Team shall be composed of individuals not responsible for case management activities or delivery of services.
  - 3. The Quality Review Teams shall:
    - a. identify young adults eligible for Extended Foster Care and notify the DCS Supervisor and Program Manager of eligibility;
    - b. identify young adults who have signed the Voluntary Extended Foster Care Agreement to assign to a Quality Review team;
    - c. coordinate with the QYAs and assigned DCS Specialists to conduct reviews within the required timeframes;
    - d. facilitate review meetings;
    - e. complete reports that will satisfy State and Federal requirements for the IV-E Extended Foster Care Program;
    - f. provide information and guidance on strengths and opportunities for growth to the field staff and leadership;

- g. improve and inform future practice;
- h. provide advocacy on behalf of the qualified young adults participating in the EFC program; and
- i. contact QYAs monthly to assure supportive adults and appropriate services are in place for their transition to adulthood.

**F. Data Collection**

The Quality Review Team shall maintain accurate and up-to-date records on all qualified young adults who are involved in the Extended Foster Care Program. The data will include:

- 1. eligibility determinations;
- 2. dates of all conducted reviews with participants listed; and
- 3. the deadlines for the qualified young adults' next reviews.

**G. Federal Statute Requirements**

The EFCQR will be responsible for verifying and recording that EFC eligibility requirements are met. Determination is verified prior to the review, discussed at the review and documented in the Extended Foster Care Quality Review Summary Report.

## **VI. PROCEDURES**

- A. At the Age of Majority Team Decision Making meeting, the qualified young adult is provided information about the Extended Foster Care Program and encouraged to participate through a Voluntary Foster Care Agreement.
- B. Before the meeting, the Extended Foster Care Quality Review (EFCQR) Specialists will complete the Quality Review Team checklist and review the electronic record. The EFCQR Specialists will prepare for the quality review, ensuring the program eligibility is maintained, as well as identifying any noted concerns of the qualified young adult or other team members, and begin completing the Extended Foster Care Administrative Review Summary Report.
- C. A Young Adult Self-Report template can be verbally completed with QRT or emailed to the young adult to complete prior to the meeting.
- D. The Review Specialist will review the following prior to the meeting:
  - 1. the DCS Specialist progress report;

2. pertinent information in the electronic record; and
3. program eligibility.

E. Review Meeting

1. The initial EFCQR shall take place in a neutral location that is most convenient to the QYA.
2. The reviews will be led by the QRT with the qualified young adult.
3. Two Extended Foster Care Review Specialists will be present; one to facilitate the meeting and the other to document.
4. The QYA will describe the efforts made to achieve the goals identified in the case plan.
5. If the QRT finds that the Department has not made sufficient efforts to implement the case plan, the QRT will assist in identifying services and supports to promote the QYA's efforts in achieving the goals of the case plan. The QRT will assist in completing the service authorizations or other referrals during the review.
6. Following the review, an Extended Foster Care Quality Review Summary Report will be completed, emailed to all team members and uploaded into the electronic case management information system. The report will include the following:
  - a. discussion and outcome of any previous reviews, if applicable;
  - b. the QYA's housing arrangement;
  - c. the QYA's desire to continue participating in extended foster care;
  - d. progress towards successful transition to adulthood; and
  - e. any skills and services that the QYA is actively engaged in or is needed to support the case plan goals.
7. The QRT provides a Young Adult Satisfaction Survey to the QYA to evaluate the program after each review.

F. Grievance Process

1. If a qualified young adult disagrees with a Department decision to reduce, terminate, or deny services, the QYA may:
  - a. file a grievance under this Section;

- b. choose not to file a grievance and appeal the adverse action by filing a notice of appeal within 20 days after receipt of the adverse action decision reducing, terminating, or denying services; or
  - c. file a grievance, and if the person is dissatisfied with the results of the grievance process, appeal within 20 days after receipt of the grievance response letter.
- 2. In the event that the qualified young adult disagrees with a Department decision to reduce, terminate, or deny services, the DCS Specialist or responsible agency staff shall:
  - a. inform the QYA of the formal grievance process;
  - b. provide the QYA with the Department's grievance form and directions for submittal to the designated Department staff, such as the Department's Ombudsman's Office; and
  - c. offer to assist the QYA in completing and submitting the form, or referring the person to the appropriate Department staff, such as the Department's Ombudsman, for assistance in completing and submitting the form.
- 3. Upon receipt of the grievance form, the Department shall:
  - a. schedule a face-to-face meeting with the qualified young adult who filed the grievance within seven work days from the date the grievance was received by the Department, or schedule a teleconference if a face-to-face meeting is not possible;
  - b. evaluate the grievance to determine if the grievance can be resolved by the Department to the satisfaction of the person;
  - c. mail a grievance response letter to the person within three work days of the meeting; and
  - d. include an appeal form with the grievance response letter so the person may appeal the adverse action.
- 4. If the qualified young adult agrees with the Department's decision to terminate services, the DCS Specialist or responsible agency staff shall proceed with case closure including completing a discharge plan with the

person that includes information on aftercare services and other community based support.

5. The Department shall retain documentation of all grievances in the case file according to the Department's retention schedule.

G. Final Extended Foster Care Quality Review

Prior to a qualified young adult's final EFCQR, the review team will discuss the QYA's transition and aftercare plan to include the following:

1. Written information concerning the QYA's family history, whereabouts of siblings, if appropriate, and education and health records have been provided to the QYA;
2. The social security card, certified birth certificate, a state issued identification card or driver's license, proof of citizenship or residence, and proof of foster care are in the possession of the QYA; and
3. An established plan is in place to support the QYA's housing, employment, education, medical needs, and connections to permanent family, and/or supportive adults who are actively involved in their lives.

## VII. FORMS INDEX

[CSO-2176 Voluntary Extended Foster Care Agreement](#)

[CSO-2095 Extended Foster Care Quality Review Summary Report](#)

[CSO-1304B Grievance Form](#)